

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 23550

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (BARRE, RAYMOND)
SUBJECT: BARRE VISIT

1. SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION: THE EMBASSY HAS REPORTED ON A NUMBER OF MATTERS BEARING ON THE BARRE VISIT IN PARIS TELEGRAMS 23165, 23286, 23217, 23273 AND 23049. WE ARE SENDING BY SEPTTEL A PROFILE ON BARRE. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE IS TO TAKE A PRELIMINARY LOOK AT SPECIFIC ISSUES WHICH MAY ARISE. THE MATIGNON IS ONLY BEGINNING SUBSTANTIVE PREPARATIONS FOR THE VISIT. THIS PROCESS WILL GO INTO HIGH GEAR IN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS BUT WILL CONTINUE VIRTUALLY UP TO VISIT. THE FOLLOWING RUN-DOWN IS THEREFORE TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING EVENTS IN THE COMING WEEKS. MANY OF THE ISSUES WERE IDENTIFIED IN THE AMBASSADOR'S RECENT TALKS WITH FRANCOIS-PONCET, GUIRINGAUD AND LABOULAYE. OTHERS EMERGED FROM INFORMAL EMBASSY CONTACTS AT THE MATIGNON, THE QUAI AND THE ECONOMIC MINISTRIES.

2. SEVERAL OVERALL IMPRESSIONS STAND OUT:

- BARRE'S ADVISORS HAVE COUNSELED HIM THAT HE SHOULD NOT ONLY STRESS THE ECONOMIC ISSUES, IN WHICH HE IS MOST EXPERT BUT, FOR MAXIMUM DOMESTIC IMPACT,
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SHOULD DEAL IN WASHINGTON WITH ALL THE MAJOR ISSUES ACROSS THE BOARD TO DRIVE HOME THE OVERALL SCOPE OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES. IN THIS CONTEXT THE QUAI HAS SUGGESTED THAT BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DETENTE, ARMS CONTROL AND OTHER FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF HIS AGENDA. DETAILED ASPECTS WOULD BE COVERED BY OTHER OFFICIALS DURING AND AFTER THE TRIP.

- THE UNDERLYING PURPOSE OF THE VISIT REMAINS TO ENHANCE BARRE'S AND THE MAJORITY'S IMAGE IN THE ELECTIONS AS WELL AS TO DISCUSS MAJOR FRANCO-AMERICAN AND MULTILATERAL ISSUES. WITHIN THIS CONTEXT THEY EXPECT AS OF NOW THAT BARRE WILL PUT HEAVIEST STRESS ON THE FOLLOWING:

-- ENERGY AND WHAT FLOWS FROM IT;

-- CONCORDE;

-- DETENTE AND EAST-WEST RELATIONS;

-- THE KEY NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL DISARMAMENT ISSUES; AND

-- STRATEGIC CONCEPTIONS AS THEY RELATE TO EUROPE'S DEFENSE.

END SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION.

3. IN THE FOREGOING CONTEXT, FOLLOWING IS A PRELIMINARY CHECKLIST OF ISSUES FOR THE BARRE VISIT:

I. DOMESTIC POLITICS

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BARRE WILL PROBABLY GIVE AN OPTIMISTIC READING OF THE MAJORITY'S CHANCES IN NEXT MARCH'S LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, POINTING TO AGREEMENT ON BASIC OBJECTIVES BY THE MAJORITY PARTIES AND THE ALLIANCE OF "ELECTORAL CONVENIENCE" BY THE LEFT PARTIES. HE COULD REFER TO THE CURRENT POLEMIC IN THE LEFT OVER DEFENSE POLICY TO SUPPORT HIS THESIS. HE MIGHT ADD THAT SIX MONTHS STILL REMAIN TO RECOUP LOST GROUND DESPITE A 53-47 PERCENT LEAD FOR THE LEFT IN CURRENT POLLS.

II. ENERGY AND ECONOMIC MATTERS, INCLUDING FOLLOW-UP ON ISSUES FROM THE LONDON SUMMIT

A. ENERGY. THE PRIME MINISTER IS LIKELY TO PLACE MAJOR EMPHASIS ON THIS SUBJECT. HE IS MOST

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ANXIOUS TO ASSURE WASHINGTON UNDERSTANDING OF FRENCH VIEWS AND VITAL INTERESTS IN THE NUCLEAR ENERGY FIELD, INCLUDING NON-PROLIFERATION (INFCE). HE IS ALSO QUITE CONCERNED ABOUT GROWING US RELIANCE ON IMPORTED OIL. CONVERSELY, FRENCH DEMAND IS UNDER CONTROL -- LARGELY BECAUSE OF A SLOWER-THAN-EXPECTED RECOVERY. WE SHOULD NOTE WITH APPROVAL THE GOF'S CONSERVATION EFFORTS. IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO HAVE ONGOING DISCUSSION ON ALL THESE POINTS. THIS SHOULD INCLUDE A CONCISE RUNDOWN OF WHERE WE STAND WITH CONGRESS ON THE PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL ENERGY PLAN.

B. CONCORDE. PRESUMABLY JUDGE POLLACK WILL HAVE HANDED DOWN HIS DECISION SOME TIME IN AUGUST, AND WE WILL HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS THE CONSEQUENCES. BARRE'S VISIT WILL OCCUR JUST A FEW DAYS BEFORE SEPTEMBER 24, WHEN THE SIXTEEN-MONTH TRIAL PERIOD AT DULLES WILL BE CONCLUDED AND THE USG WILL BE EXPECTED TO MAKE A DEFINITIVE DECISION ON CONCORDE LANDING RIGHTS. SHOULD THERE BE SIGNS OF HESITANCY ON OUR PART BARRE COULD BE EXPECTED TO FIND OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPRESS THE GOF CONCERN THAT A DEFINITIVE DECISION BE MADE. (SEE PARIS 23260 FOR GOF DEMARCHE ON THIS SUBJECT.)

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C. TRADE POLICY. BARRE WILL CERTAINLY WANT TO GET INTO WHAT FRANCE HOPES MIGHT EMERGE FROM THE MTN IN TERMS OF "ORGANIZED FREEDOM OF WORLD TRADE" WHICH

WOULD MAINTAIN A HIGH VOLUME OF INTERCHANGE WITHOUT DISRUPTION OF KEY NATIONAL INDUSTRIES IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. HE WOULD HAVE SUCH TROUBLE-AREAS AS TEXTILES AND STEEL IN MIND. (SEE PARIS 19627 REPORTING BARRE'S JULY 5 SPEECH IN PARIS AT LUNCHEON SPONSORED BY FRENCH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN THE USA.) UNDER THIS HEADING MIGHT ALSO COME SOME DISCUSSION OF SPECIFIC SECTORAL PROBLEMS INCLUDING FRANCE'S RESISTANCE TO RENEWAL OF THE MFA UNTIL ACCEPTABLE BILATERALS HAVE BEEN WORKED OUT BY THE EC; NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES SUCH AS COMMODITY AGREEMENTS AND THE COMMON FUND; AND FRENCH WORRIES ABOUT "US PROTECTIONISM", PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO CIVIL AIR -- AIRBUS AND THE ANDERSON BILL.

D. STATE OF FRENCH ECONOMY. HAVING BEEN PUT INTO OFFICE AS "FRANCE'S NUMBER ONE ECONOMIST" TO WAGE THE WAR AGAINST INFLATION, BARRE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY HEAD FOR WASHINGTON PREPARED TO DESCRIBE HOW EFFECTIVE HIS BATTLE HAS BEEN TO DATE AND WHAT HIS EXPECTATIONS ARE FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. HE IS LIKELY TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF A STABLE FRANC FOR FRANCE AND THE BARRE PLAN. HE PROBABLY WILL DISCUSS MONETARY MATTERS, LARGELY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SMOOTH OPERATION OF THE SYSTEM OF FLOATING RATES WHICH PERMITS PAR VALUES, IF SO DESIRED BY ANY MEMBER. (FRANCE HAS NEVER FORMALLY RAISED THE OLD ISSUE OF STABLE BUT ADJUSTABLE RATES VS. FLOATING RATES SINCE RAMBOUILLET. WE DOUBT THAT BARRE WILL DO SO NOW.) THE GOF IS, HOWEVER, VERY MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT GLOBAL DEMAND OUTLOOK FOR 1978. THEY BASICALLY AGREE WITH THE US POSITION RE GERMAN AND SECRET

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JAPANESE ADJUSTMENTS BUT FEAR A RELATIVE SLOWDOWN IN US IN 1978 WITHOUT COMPENSATING PICK-UP IN GERMANY AND JAPAN.

III. EAST-WEST RELATIONS, ARMS CONTROL AND DEFENSE MATTERS

A. DETENTE. THIS WILL BE THE FIRST TOP-LEVEL FRENCH-US MEETING SINCE GISCARD'S NEWSWEEK INTERVIEW. THAT INTERVIEW ONLY RAISED IN A NEW WAY A FRENCH SELF-PERCEPTION OF SOME 20 YEARS STANDING CONCERNING THE SPECIAL ROLE WHICH IT PLAYS BETWEEN THE GREAT POWERS AND THE SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION WHICH IT CAN MAKE IN BETTER EAST-WEST UNDERSTANDING. BARRE WILL NO DOUBT WANT TO DISSIPATE LINGERING US CONCERNS ABOUT GISCARD'S REMARKS IN NEWSWEEK. BUT HE WILL ALSO EMPHASIZE FRENCH ATTACHMENT TO DETENTE AND CONCERN OVER WHAT HE PERCEIVES AS A COOLING OF US-USSR RELA-

TIONS. THIS DISCUSSION WILL OF COURSE SUBSUME THE RELATED ISSUES OF THE BELGRADE CSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE AND THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN LIGHT OF THE CHARLESTON AND OTHER RECENT US AND SOVIET STATEMENTS.

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B. ARMS CONTROL. FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY AND DEFENSE EXPERTS APPRECIATE THE LIMITED ROLE A SECOND-LEVEL POWER CAN PLAY IN THIS AREA, WHILE MAINTAINING THAT THE MAJOR POWERS MUST BEGIN REDUCTIONS FIRST BEFORE EXPECTING ANYTHING SUBSTANTIAL OF THE LESSER. BARRE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR WHAT WE THINK ARE REASONABLE PROSPECTS IN THIS FIELD FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS. AT THE SAME TIME, GUIRINGAUD TOLD US FRANCE IS NOT STANDING STILL, BUT INTENDS TO MAKE A MAJOR PRESENTATION AT THE UN DISARMAMENT SESSION NEXT MAY. THE GOF STILL HAS SERIOUS TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING WHY THE US CONTINUES TO PUSH MBFR. FRENCH ARE MAINLY CONCERNED THAT CONVENTIONAL FORCES MIGHT BE FROZEN AT LEVELS TO THE WEST'S DISADVANTAGE AND THAT GERMAN PUBLIC OPINION MIGHT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED -- ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF SALT WHICH, IF SUCCESSFUL, ENHANCES THE IMPORTANCE OF WESTERN CONVENTIONAL FORCES FOR EUROPEAN DEFENSE. CLOSELY RELATED TO MBFR ARE FRENCH CONCERNS ON CTB, CCD AND RESTRAINTS ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS (VIA THE ECONOMICS OF EUROPE'S INDUSTRIAL ARMAMENTS BASE).

C. STRATEGIC ISSUES GENERALLY. INCREASINGLY

IN RECENT DAYS, OUR TALKS WITH THE QUAI AND OTHERS
HAVE REFLECTED FRENCH CONCERNS ABOUT HOW OUR ARMS
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CONTROL INITIATIVES AND PLANS FOR STRENGTHENING
ALLIANCE DEFENSES FIT TOGETHER (E.G. CONVENTIONAL
AND NUCLEAR ASPECTS AND ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINTS).
OLD FRENCH FEARS ABOUT THE CREDIBILITY AND RELIABILITY
OF THE US COMMITMENT ARE NEAR THE SURFACE -- AND NOT
JUST BECAUSE OF EVANS AND NOVAK. THEY HAVE ALSO
REFLECTED A FRENCH DESIRE FOR DETAILED BILATERAL
DISCUSSION WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT BARRE'S VISIT
WILL SET THE STAGE FOR THIS. BARRE WILL CERTAINLY
DEFEND WELL-KNOWN FRENCH ATTITUDES ON WESTERN DEFENSE
AND THE FRENCH ROLE IN THE ALLIANCE BUT -- WITHIN
THESE BROAD LIMITS -- WILL PROBABLY CONFIRM RECENT
TENDENCIES TOWARD QUIET COOPERATION IN MANY FIELDS.
BUT POSSIBILITIES FOR MOVING FORWARD (E.G. ON ARMS
STANDARDIZATION AND THE "TWO WAY STREET") REMAIN
UNCERTAIN.

IV. OTHER ISSUES

A. EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. MOST ISSUES BEARING ON
THE EC WILL COME UP AS SPECIFIC TOPICS SUCH AS TRADE.
BECAUSE OF HIS BACKGROUND AS AN EC COMMISSIONER,
HOWEVER, SOME GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE COMMUNITY'S
OUTLOOK AND US-EC RELATIONS MIGHT BE IN ORDER.

B. MIDDLE EAST. BARRE WILL WANT THE LATEST ON
HOW WE SEE MATTERS PROGRESSING JUST PRIOR TO THE UNGA.
HE MAY WANT TO EXPLORE HOW FRANCE COULD CONTRIBUTE.

C. AFRICA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN. GUIRINGAUD'S
FOUR-NATION VISIT TO EAST AFRICA BEGINNING AUGUST 11
POINTS UP CONTINUING FRENCH INTEREST IN THE CONTINENT.
INDEPENDENCE IN DJIBOUTI HAS NOT LESSENE FRENCH

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ATTENTION TO EVENTS IN THE HORN OR THE INDIAN OCEAN.
SOME GENERAL REVIEW OF OUR NEW AFRICAN POLICY WOULD
SEEM IN ORDER.
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